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Table 13: (APPENDIX XII)

Functional Calendar of Seasons and Human Activities among the Highland-Plateau Amhara

Months Abyssinian Calendar (Julian) in Amharic	Months Equivalent in Western (Gregorian) Calendar	Climatic Seasons on Abyssinian High Plateau	Annual Cycle of Amhara Ecological Activities (Economics, Agriculture, etc.)	Annual Cycle of Religious Seasons and Activities among Coptic-Abyssinian Amhara.	Cycle of Amhara Social Events	Syncretism	New Ethiopian Civic Events on National Calendar
Mäskäräm 1	Sept. 11	receding flood after rainy season; yellow "mäsqäl" daisy carpets land; spring ("täddaye").	place beehive basket-work in trees (swarming season); pasture is in flower; plowing new or fallow field for later cultivation, while soil is still fairly soft ("gaï").	17th Mäskäräm: Feast of the (true) Cross ("yäMäsqäl Mäal")- public rejoicing around bonfire (dammära). Minor: 1st Mäskäräm is St. John's Day. 18th: "Arafa" - (Reunion of Adam and Eve)	Kin visiting when paths passable; children bring New Year flower bouquets ("enqutatash") on and after 1st (St. John's Day); and receive premies of new clothes for Mäsqäl.		"Mäsqäl" is now also a national holiday: Emperor appears at bonfire (Sept. 27th).
to	to						
Mäskäräm 30	Oct. 10						
Teqemt 1	Oct. 11	sunny growing & ripening season (säwwänni sega).	Remove honey from hive. Harvest first barley ("gebs"), thresh and winnow it for roasting or beer-making ("tällo"); sell honey to make mead ("täj"); children guard harvest against birds and baboons.	12th Teqemt: St. Michael's Feast "Mikael"; services followed by picnics in countryside. Local: 5th: pilgrimage to "tobal" holy wells and waterfalls of Zäbrä Mänfäs Qeddus (Abo).	outdoor games of children: boys make bullroarers ("gurgurroosh") to frighten birds away, shoot pebbles at baboons from slingshots. Girls dance rounds and greet storks arriving "from Jerusalem".		Annual commemoration of Coronation of Emperor Haile Selassie, Nov 2nd. (Teqemt 23rd).
to	to						
Teqemt 30	Nov. 9						

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1: Messing E-5 (1953-1954)1957 MP5 Amhara MP5

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Hedar 1 to Hedar 30	Nov. 10 to Dec. 9	ripening of later cereal grains; sunny, occasional hazy mists.	harvest of cereal grains, esp. early "t'eff" for bread; "mig" and "talba" oilseeds. Teamwork in harvest and hut construction; boys take cattle from sun-scorched upland to green valleys.	12th Hedar: "Mikael" Feast, with picnics, in other localities. Minor: 6th "Qwusqwam"-clergy ends 40-day fast. Local: 21st "Hlen" Festival at Aksum; Muna' holiday.	Flirting season (esp. of adolescents) begins on "Mikael": fresh togas, beautification; tattooing (esp. adult divorced women). 21st: Church student holiday.		
Tahsas 1 to Tahsas 30	Dec. 10 to Jan. 8	Summer ("bälg"), hot, sunny, occasional light rains. Red aloes on rocks and thorny plants dominate scorched landscape. Rivers become brooks, brooks go dry.	Finish main harvests. Peasants take "t'eff" etc. to market in towns. Seeding of "summer barley" on irrigated fields. Traders organize caravans: produce and hides for salt and imports, coffee etc., cattle pastured in valleys.	19th Tahsas: "Gabriel" Feast-(because he came to Mary announcing Jesus' coming), esp. at Gulubi near Dire Daua. 29th Tahsas: Christmas ("Ledit", or "Gänna"), with all-night church services and special chants.	19th-29 is traditional hockey ("Gänna") season, with climax on Christmas. Judges begin riding their circuit to hear litigation (land tenure, damages, etc.).		19th: Emp. Haile Selassi travels to Gulubi(for "Gabriel"). 29th: Emperor receives students, in traditional toga and Jodphurs.
Ter 1 to Ter 30	Jan. 9 to Feb. 7	Height of dry summer ("bälg"). Some sluggish rivers considered poisonous for cattle.	Harvest irrigated garden crops: peas (shoobera), plant (gomän) (cabbage). Sell produce for taxes, and to buy salt, hot peppers, coffee.	Holy month: 11th Ter is "Tembkt"(Epiphany), holiest day of year: processions to specially created pool, with sacred "tabot"(tablet), blessing of water for the coming light rains. 6th: "Gesrat"(Circumcision of Jesus). 19th: "Giyorgis" (St. George) 21st: "Astärye Maryam" (Mary)	Taxgatherers collect for govt. for landlords, rent and gifts for the church. On the 11th (Epiphany), young men perform horse tournament("gugs") women are coiffured, henna-reddened palms. Climax of flirting.	secondary among Falashas as harvest festival. Monday	On Epiphany, Jan. 19th Pentecost (11th Ter), ("mayrär") Emperor H.I. receives foreign diplomats in 12th traditional costume.

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Yäkatit I to Yäkatit 30	Feb. 8 to Mar. 9	dry; east wind brings puffy clouds (and hungry locusts) sense ripening of wild fruits.	late barley("adja gebs") matures on irrigated fields and is harvested; price of sheep and other meat doubles (due to heavy meat-eating just before lenten season) 11th-20th ("abed amus").	Lenten Fast "kudade" (lit. suffering) begins after the 22nd, for 55 days though called "arba tom" (Fast of 40). 8th-10th is 3-day Fast of Ninïwah ("Tsoma Nanïwe"). 16th is feast "Kedane Mehret".	Housewives during the long Lent must show skill with vegetable dishes and spices, (even butter and milk are not allowed). Happy dancing on 16th: Jesus promised to save.	eve of 22nd: annual convention of "zar" spirit doctors.	On 12th(Feb. 19th) memorial services for Graziani massacre 1937 On 23rd(Mar. 2nd) Adua Victory(1896) celebrated.
Mägabit I to Mägabit 30	Mar. 10 to April 8	dry; burning of bush to keep locusts away, and new fields (slash-and-burn).	cultivated fruit(peach) ripens; garden crops are harvested for Lent food; commercial caravans hurry to complete tours before rains; cattle is pastured far into bush.	Minor, because of Lent: 5th "Abo-Gabre Manfës Qeddus" worship and dance on Mt. Zuqwala. 19th "Deora Zayt" commemorating Mount of Olives feast in Jerusalem 27th "MeSkane Alam" =(Savior)	Youngsters pasturing cattle in far bush have liberty for games and hazing, hut-building, etc. No weddings in Lent.		
Miyazya 1 to Miyazya 30	April 9 to May 8	Light rains begin, Autumn ("bäga"). As soon as soil softens, plowings begin.	refreshed by drizzles, peasants trade for new iron plowpoints and prepare soil, esp. after Lent. Prices of meat, even grain and pepper double for Easter feasting, so buyers travel far from towns. No work during Passion week("hemamat") before Easter.	Severe fast during last 3 days of Lent, "seqlät" Good Friday on the 15th. All-night services eve of the 17th, Fasika(Easter) wearing green reeds on forehead("qetäma") given by priests Sat. morning. Resurrection("tensaé") announced 4 A.M. Sunday, meat-feast begins.	Second big wedding season from Easter to heavy rains, as unmarried girls wash clothes, redden palms, watch young men at javelin throwing and ball ("qenchebt") games.	17th: Muslims (on Easter) celebrate "Sheykh Abader" water saint.	27th:(May 5th): Annual commemoration return & restoration of Haile Selassie in May 1941, ("Timkat Bäal") entry into Addis Ababa

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Genbot 1	May 9	light rains; spots of fresh, green grass (for pasturage nearer home). Storks fly northward.	Women prepare fuel for rainy season: dead-wood; piles of sun-dried cowdung, canted with layer of mud. Caravans hurry home from Sudan, etc. Fish "senre" caught in rivers.	1st: Lediata (Birthday of Virgin Mary): After services, last, large, out-door picnic, under "dass" shelter 24th: "Täklä Haymanot" day, pilgrimage to his holy well at Däbrä Libanos. Children sing of country's well-being to storks.	1st: Men and women celebrate outdoor picnic separately, but young folk meet while older ones feast on meat and barley beer.	
to	to					
Genbot 30	June 7					
Säne 1	June 8	Heavy rains, winter "Kerämt" begin: fogs, storms, cold rain. Fishing season. Children are taught to swim before rivers are dangerous.	Intensive plowing of softened soil, seeding by broadcasting: barley, then tyeff, wheat. Beans and other garden crops are seeded and fenced. Fish is plentiful and cheap.	9th: Resumption of Wednesday and Friday "Fast of the Salvation" recessed since Easter. Clergy: "Par'eqlitos" 6th-feast; 7th "tsomä hawaryat" - 1 month Fast of Apostles.	Master gives feast to retainers for plowing, "erf mäday", with fried fish, beer, "azmari" music, and "hotu" dance. Mutual aid in hut repair.	
to	to					
Säne 30	July 7					
Hamlé 1	July 8	Heavy monsoon rains, sometimes tornadoes, sheets of rain almost daily. Cold	Indoor work; some minor hut repairs.	Intensive church school for boys, who are not needed at this season for any other work. Clergy: 5th: Fast of Peter and Paul ends month Fast of Apostles.	Standstill (e.g. of visiting) due to swollen brooks and washed-out paths.	16th(July 23) Birthday ("Ledät") of Emp: Haile Selassie; praise hymns chanted in churches.
to	to					
Hamlé 30	August 6					

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Nähasē 1 to Nähasē 30	August 7 to Sept. 5	Heavy rains; fishing easy in muddy, turbulent rivers.	Some sow a bit of tyēff and "Adja" barley, to have it late in harvest. Cattle taken to upland.	7th: Trinity ("Selassye"); parade, despite rain, with "tabot". 13th: Transfiguration of Jesus ("Buhe", "Debrä Tabor") feast, with torch-light parade.	13th: mock battles with whips ("jeraf") fought by young men in afternoon, between hamlets and individuals. Younger children badger adults for gifts in morning.	7th: Pictures of Emp. H.S. carried in parade, because Trinity is his name-sake; flags, etc.
Pagumen 1	Sept. 6	Rains broken by occasional sunshine.	End of tradit. fiscal year: "Nägadras" had to account to the feudal lord for dues he had collected from merchants.	3rd: Feast of St. Raphael, the water saint, bathing in his holy water. 5th: Eve of feast of St. John: bury "lefafa sedeq", scroll; bathe.	3rd: Examination of boys in church school to decide who will be deacons; so some use drugs as stimulant. Younger children collect peas for good harvests in new year.	
2	7					
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1: Messing E-5 (1953-1954)1957 MP5 Amhara MP5

8: Rey G-5 (1910-1920)1935
MP5 Amhara MP5

that is, at the end of a long period of fasting, they eat nothing at all, and so far do they carry this rule that sometimes one or two of our older servants have become so weak that they have had to go home and remain in bed, so exhausted were they.

On Wednesdays and Fridays they eat no meat, and wherever they are or whatever they are doing they adhere firmly to this rule. I was immensely struck by this when on trek; for example, one day we had bought an ox for our men and on Thursday they had had a great raw meat banquet. The next day being Friday they would not touch an atom of the quantities of raw meat hung round the camp, though they had had a long and tiring march and had nothing else to eat. One of the men, who was really ill, would not drink a drop of the fresh milk we had prescribed for him, though he was excessively weak and could not retain anything else.

Their feasts are observed just as whole-heartedly, and obviously with more enthusiasm, inasmuch as much eating and drinking and no work are the order of the day. Their main feasts are New Year, the Feast of the Cross or *Maskal*, *Temkat* (Epiphany), and Easter.

Their New Year's Day, the 1st Maskaram, falls on the 11th September (or the 12th in the European year preceding our Leap year) and is a great feast, and of course a general holiday, the religious side of which is strongly marked, the Empress and the Court attending the Church of St. George in state.

No work is done, and there is much eating, an oasis of plenty in the desert of fasting which starts again on the day after New Year's Day, and continues until the end of the month. Bands of grown-up people and groups of children wander round serenading the differ-

8: Rey G-5 (1910-1920)1935
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ent houses, and although their intentions are doubtless of the best, the sounds they produce leave much to be desired from the point of view of harmony.

At the end of September is held the Feast of *Maskal*. There are three separate functions during the week in this connection, firstly the Dance of the Priests, 21st September, then the Dance of the Cross, 27th September, which includes a fantasia in which thousands of mounted troops take part, and finally the great *Gebbar* at which 17,000 to 18,000 men are fed (28th September).

On the day of the Dance of the Cross, after dinner we could see from our verandah the whole country for miles in every direction dotted with bonfires—a wonderful sight. Every Abyssinian must light something on this night, and they seemed to have done it pretty thoroughly; even high up in the mountains far away one could see the little points of light everywhere.

The Feast of the *Maskal* itself, which took place on the next day, is mainly remarkable for the great banquet; this I have described elsewhere, and though it is held on a religious festival the religious nature of it is less apparent.

Temkat (18th, 19th, and 20th January) is perhaps the most beautiful and remarkable of their various pageants, and I will accordingly endeavour to give some idea of this ceremony, unique as it probably is.

It is difficult in mere words to do justice to the really wonderful pageantry attendant on these religious festivals. Their historical significance alone is worthy of the pen of a Gibbon, for they are probably some 3000 years old in some of their features, and half-

8: Rey G-5 (1910-1920)1935
MP5 Amhara MP5

time to the rhythm, then the little bell cymbals joined in, and finally the big drums. 796 535

All this time the long lines of priests were advancing and retiring, turning this way and that, their bodies swaying to the music. The time got quicker and quicker, others joined in, their movements became accentuated and their voices rose to a climax; then quite suddenly sound and movement ceased and the long lines were quite still.

After this, passages were read from enormous silver-covered Bibles, and with a final boom of the drums it was all over—a morning's journey back thro' ɜh the centuries, probably unique in the world in its character. 796

The Abyssinian Easter falls a week later than our own and is the occasion of great feasting; much rifle firing takes place the night before (or used to two years ago when ammunition was more plentiful), and much eating and drinking, on the day itself. And I am bound to say they must need it, for they have been fasting for forty days, and for the two previous days have eaten nothing at all. 796 527

Bands of priests visit the principal houses, soliciting alms, and I find the following description of one of these visits in my diary:

"Soon after breakfast a party of about five priests accompanied by attendants came up the drive, stationed themselves in front of the house, and began to sing and ring bells to wish us a prosperous Easter. Some of the priests wore their gorgeous vestments, and all had brilliant green or red silk parasols fringed with gold braid. We sent them out a small offering, which appeared to please them very much.

8: Rey G-5 (1910-1920)1935
MP5 Amhara MP5

196 "Then they blessed a lot of long grass they had, and
• 527 gave it to us and we distributed it amongst the staff. Every servant there tied his piece of grass tightly round his head and wore it all day—they all seemed highly delighted."

111 But in spite of their strict observance of feasts and their pride in the fact of their being Christians, I cannot really think that they could in any sense of the word be described as a really religious people, their lives being in no way a reflection of their theoretical beliefs. Their religion is overlaid with a thick layer of superstition, some of which is merely curious, but some apt to have dangerous results. Thus they wear their charms and amulets suspended round their necks by a silken cord (never leather, which is used by Mohammedans for this purpose); they have a strong belief in the power of the "evil eye"; they will not look at a person eating, they will not start on journeys on certain days, and they believe that certain houses are inhabited by evil spirits and will not live in them.

181 We came across some curious examples of this latter superstition. Two important Abyssinian nobles had built in their grounds quite nice stone and mortar houses in the European style. These houses were lying empty, and their owners were living in native built *tukuls*, for the reason that their tame priests had told them that evil would befall them if they moved into their new residences.

Another and more serious example was that of a chief who was very ill with pneumonia. He was just getting over it when in the middle of one night his priest told him that he had had a vision to the effect that if he

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

*565 512 462 [854] [853] the morning and what remains to be done. The peasant may retire for a nap, and perhaps to lie with his wife, before taking up the afternoon's work. He returns for about three more hours of plowing after his noon rest. The afternoon sun burns down on him; the plow is harder to wield; he plods on. At home the women continue their work, no sóoner finishing one task than they attend to another. The mother puts the child who rides on her back to the breast whenever it cries.

*565 512 233 857 [262] [291] The shepherds do not come home for lunch. They have taken some *ǐnjarā* or *dābo* ("whole wheat bread") along with them. In harvest months they enjoy a special treat, roasting grains or pulse which they have snatched from somebody's field. Though their responsibility is great—a boy will be whipped if an animal in his charge gets hurt or lost or if it gets into fields of grain—their work is light. They spend the day running idly, practicing war chants, playing at various adult activities. Their mood is as free as the great spaces about them. As the day grows hotter they are likely to discard their sheepskin covering and move about naked. Toward dusk, the shepherds' spirits quicken. Their songs become more excited; lively melodies are heard from their wooden flutes. It is time to go home to family, supper, and fire.

*565 512 [264] When father and sons enter after the day's work, they start munching on roasted grains, *ǐnjarā*, or *dābo*. They may drink some *ṭallā* and relax. It begins to get chilly. The room is dark and smoky, the fleas bite them—but it is the easiest time of the day. The family is together, and everyone enjoys talking and hearing about the homely events of the day. A few hours after dark, supper is served. Parents and older children eat together out of a common basket. Younger children and servants stand respectfully, awaiting their turn, grateful if someone places a large bite of food in their mouths.

[515] [182] [513] [352] After dinner there is a great washing of feet—the father's by his wife or children, the others' by themselves. The peasant recites or reads his evening prayers and lies down on his bed made of strips of cowhide. The children settle for the night on the clay benches. Last of all, the mother covers the embers with ashes, sets out the grain she must grind before dawn, and places her weary body next to that of her husband's.

*565 512 527 This grueling schedule is not repeated every day. On nearly half the days in each month heavy labor is not permitted—men may not plow or harvest, women may not grind or spin. These are holy days: Saturdays and Sundays (both of which are honored as the Sabbath in Abyssinia) and the monthly and annual commemorations of the saints.

*565 512 527 462 [524] The woman's schedule on such days is only lightened, not radically altered. Food and drink must still be prepared and served. Except for a possible trip to church with her husband Sunday morning before breakfast, a woman's hours are still confined to the home compound and its obligations. The shepherds must still take care of their herds, though some boys may get together for

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

games with sticks and cloth, or wooden, balls. The adult males may do odd jobs around home, such as loading and moving bags of grain, or repairing farm equipment. But they are likely to gather at some convenient spot, perhaps at a boundary between fields, and discuss land disputes, arrange marriages, reconcile quarrels, or tell stories.

The daily activity of the Amhara peasant is somber and severe. It is guided by the constant awareness that one must provide for oneself everything he needs in this world. His is a life of deadening exertion, devoid of casual gaiety. Even in his diversions the mood is generally serious and tense.

One of the Amhara peasant's principal diversions is litigation. On days when heavy labor is forbidden the judge's yard is filled; nor is it ever empty on work days. Some peasants spend as much as twenty to twenty-five per cent of their waking days at court. (Because of its importance in Amhara culture, litigation will be discussed at greater length in later chapters.)

Going to market is another diversion. The trip is made by the peasant or his wife, or both, according to the needs of the household. The wife usually is responsible for transactions dealing with cooking equipment and spices, the husband for animals and farm equipment, while either is competent to negotiate about the great common denominator of Amhara life—grain. Exchanges are made either by barter or currency, which in olden times consisted of salt bars, pepper, and iron, as well as silver.

The market provides an occasion for seeing distant relatives and friends, catching up on the latest news of the area, and generally countering the normal isolation of the peasant's life. It is especially stimulating for children, who may be treated to a piece of sugar cane if they are lucky. But the marketgoers are less absorbed with being sociable than they are with the serious business of locating the items they lack, haggling over the terms of exchange, and getting on the trail in time to arrive home before dark.

Finally, the peasant's day may be devoted to one of the many celebrations that constitute the brightest moments in his life. Huge feasts are held on the occasion of weddings, christenings, and memorial anniversaries. Feasts and special festive activities mark the various religious holidays. Indeed, apart from the alternation of the rainy season (June-September) and the long dry season, and the related alternation of planting and harvesting the different crops, it is the cycle of holidays and weddings that defines the pattern of the Abyssinian year. Yet even these holidays have a fundamentally serious tone. Apart from the feasting, they are chiefly times for the veneration of sacred symbols and the real or symbolic letting out of aggression.

The Yearly Cycle

The new year falls on St. John's Day in September. For this occasion the floor of the peasant's home is strewn with freshly cut grass, tall and green after

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

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FIG. 23.—*Clergy and government school students observing national holiday*

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FIG. 24.—*Inside a secondary school library*

[P. 142-B]

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

191 155 rhythm and rhyme of words as an epicure with a palatable viand or intoxicating old wine. . . . Like the infant, his affective state can only be pacified through a rhythmical expression of pleasurable sounds.[8]

The Amharic language itself registers a certain sensibility to the nature of poetry as an oral outlet. Agreeable and pleasing language is characterized in Amharic by the same word which is used to characterize particularly pleasing food: "*tāfata*" ("it is sweet"). The introduction to the *Chronicles* of Emperor [539] Galawdewos is but the literary embellishment of a type of statement which could be made by any Amhara:

> We commence here this beautiful narrative, of more pleasing taste to the mouth . . . than honey and sugar, which will bring pleasure to those who hear it and will give, to those who understand it, a joy like that given by song and wine.[9]

155 828 [826] The incorporation of knowledge no less than the enjoyment of words is conceived in explicitly oral terms in Amharic. The stomach is regarded as the seat of wisdom, and in the language of schoolboys the diligent student is one who has thoroughly "drunk his lesson." The experiencing of one's school as an Alma Mater is probably quite intense; as one tenth-grade student wrote in a contribution to his school newspaper, "Oh! Mother School! There is nothing like school! As a mother feeds her children with milk and bread, so does a school feed her children, the pupils, with education."[10]

155 261 574 527 Eating and drinking for their own sake, beyond what is required for nutrition, form perhaps the most obvious medium for oral erotism, and one that is cultivated to a notable degree among the Amhara. Feasting is called for on every possible occasion—christenings, funerals, and memorial services, as well as engagements, weddings, and annual holidays. The chief purpose of [575] [794] the only voluntary association in traditional Amhara society, the religious fraternal association known as the *māhebar*, is to eat and drink in honor of a certain saint on his day every month. The duration of any large celebration is said to depend on how long the food and drink last; successful ones go on for three days. Linguistic usage stresses the oral function on such occasions. One "eats at," rather than attends, a christening party; one "drinks in," rather than belongs to, a *māhebar;* one expects to "eat at," rather than dance at, somebody's wedding. The very word for Easter, "*Fāsiqā*," literally means "great feast."

155 261 264 The activity of eating is colored by a number of conventions which express its great emotional significance. The mood at mealtime is supposed to be deeply serious. Food is to be masticated aloud, indicating a total involvement with the task at hand. Not to let others hear one chewing, like eating by oneself, also is taken to imply greed. The usual obligation to stand when somebody enters the room is waived when one is eating. "Grain is king," says an

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

*121 live near the same master, they divide up the neighboring countryside to
571 avoid duplication in their begging.
181 The ordained clergy are themselves given to begging, for items ranging
735 from contributions to the local church to petty personal effects. High-ranking
[193] visitors to their locale are customarily made the objects of such solicitations.
[533] Another type of begging is practiced by the minstrels who wander about the country with their one-stringed fiddles and fecund wit, coaxing contributions from any audience they can capture. In addition to these there are numerous professional beggars—the maimed, the diseased, and the poverty-stricken—who attach themselves to a well-attended church or monastery if they are unable to travel. The *lālibalā* is a notable type within this category of mendicants.[23]

[527] In addition to honoring the periodic appeals of beggars, "big men" are supposed to provide yearly feasts (*gǐber*) at which beggars of all the above descriptions are fed. In all these instances, the solicitation and bestowal of charity contributes a solidaristic element to the network of personal relations among the Amhara.

*121 The foregoing analysis of forms of interaction among the Amhara has
181 been undertaken in order to gain material for generalizing about a psycho-
156 logical disposition. Our unspoken, tautological assumption has been that the
571 ways in which individuals typically relate to social objects (ie., other persons and collectivities) represent the sociologically relevant aspects of their psychology. Egoism and solidarism have been used here as concepts for depicting one dimension of "social character," using this term in the specific sense of comprising those aspects of personality which are both socially shared and constitutive of those actions that are oriented to social objects. We may now attempt to summarize the preceding discussion with the following definition of Amhara social character as it relates to the concept of individualism: The Amhara is primarily disposed to structure interaction in terms of self-assertion, dissension, and distrust, and to be indifferent to the concept of civil community. At the same time this egoistic orientation is blended with a warm and kindly sense of sociability, an occasional mood of generosity, and a refined sensibility regarding differences in status and the readiness to pay deference accordingly.

INDEPENDENCE VERSUS CONSTRAINT

*121 In the previous section we considered the nature of the individual's orientation toward others and toward collectivities in Amhara society. Our question now is the converse: what order of demands is made upon individuals by the institutions of that society? Specifically, we shall be concerned primarily with the degree to which the norms which govern institutional roles are